



**TOWN OF GRAFTON**  
GRAFTON MEMORIAL MUNICIPAL CENTER  
30 PROVIDENCE ROAD  
(508) 839-5335 • FAX (508) 839-4602  
www.grafton-ma.gov  
**ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMISSION (AAC)**  
**(Regular Meeting)**  
**AGENDA / MEETING NOTICE**  
Thursday, September 21, 2023 – 6:30 p.m.

2023 SEP 18 PM 3:20  
RECEIVED TOWN CLERK  
GRAFTON, MA

Zoom Conference Link to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81350270077>

Or Phone: 301-715-8592

Webinar ID: 813 5027 0077

International numbers available: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/kcaVeh9MIP>

A copy of the Grafton Public Meeting Remote Participation Guidelines, dated March 24, 2020 (and subsequent extensions) is attached to this agenda for reference. Please review the guidelines prior to joining the remote public meeting. We will be fielding questions via Chat feature. Also, written comments may be directed to [disabilitycommission@grafton-ma.gov](mailto:disabilitycommission@grafton-ma.gov).

**1. Announcements**

- a. September is **Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month** – In 2022, 988 was activated as a new three-digit dialing code to be connected to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. This confidential support line is available 24 hours a day to provide free help to people in suicidal crisis or mental health-related distress. See the [SAMHSA](https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/988) website (<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/988>) for more information.
- b. September is also **International Deaf Awareness Month.**, and the last full week is **International Week of the Deaf**. See [National Association of the Deaf](https://www.nad.org/resources/american-sign-language/international-week-of-the-deaf/) (<https://www.nad.org/resources/american-sign-language/international-week-of-the-deaf/>) for more information.

- c. October is **National Disability Employment Awareness Month** – “Advancing access and equity” is the 2023 theme. See the [U.S. Dept. of Labor](https://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/initiatives/ndeam) (<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/initiatives/ndeam>) for more information.
- d. Town Meeting – October 16, 2023 @ 7:00pm
- e. Any other announcements

**2. External Correspondence**

**3. Meeting Minutes** – August 1, 2023, August 17, 2023, and September 13, 2023

**4. Regular Meeting Schedule**

**5. Webpage Content**

**6. Old Business**

- a. Grafton By-Law Study Committee; Article 12, Safety and Order, Sections 21-1 through 21-4.
- b. Municipal ADA Improvement Grant
- c. Grafton Common, including exterior parking, pavement
- d. Any other old business items

**7. New Business**

**8. Next Meeting** Thursday, October 21, 2023, at 6:30p.m.

**Adjourn**



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**PUBLIC MEETING  
REMOTE PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES**

March 24, 2020

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, the various Boards and Committees representing the Town of Grafton will conduct their public meetings and hearings via remote participation. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted.

**In Advance of Meetings:**

- All non-emergency items are still required to be properly posted at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting. This is still done by contacting the Clerk's Office.
- All members should receive the same documents for the meeting electronically
- Supporting documents should be posted on the Town website and be available for members of the public.
- For meetings with public participation, encourage written public comments.

**Essential Components for Remote Meetings:**

- Access to participate for a quorum of committee members at the time of the meeting.
- Ability to take minutes which accurately reflect the meeting and the votes taken.
- Ability to record meeting for playback (this is not required under the order, but is preferred)
- Ability to allow for real-time public participation/comments (this is not required under the order, but is preferred)

- Meetings with public hearings must provide access for third party participation to all members of the committee.

### **Identifying the Proper Medium to Conduct Meetings:**

While we are suspending the use of Municipal Center Conference Rooms and the local broadcasting equipment, there are alternatives for Boards and Committees to consider. Below are a few options available to Committees. There may be alternatives that members are more comfortable using which will be permitted so long as the essential components for all meetings are met through use of that medium.

- *Executive Town of Grafton Zoom Account with Webinar Functions* – this account was purchased by the Town Administrator's Office and has a webinar function for hosting meetings that require public participation/third party access for participation. This method is currently the preferred method and should be used by Boards and Committees that have hearings and require third party participation through public comments or from applicants seeking permits. (includes but is not limited to: Select Board, Planning Board, ZBA, CPC, School Committee, Conservation Commission)
  - At this time, the Town only has one executive host account with a webinar feature. If you wish to use the executive zoom account with webinar feature, you may need to schedule meetings at different times/days than your board typically meets to ensure no conflict with other meetings.
- *Standard/Free Zoom Accounts* – Anyone can access a free zoom account with up to 100 participants for a maximum 40-minute meeting. This function will allow for Boards and Committees to record their meetings for future playback and the ability to share screens. Please note that there are several systems available that offer similar abilities and any of them can be used for this purpose. (ex. Google Meet, Skype for Business, Microsoft Teams, etc.)
- *Free Conference Call Line*- For Boards and Committees that typically do not have recorded meetings and require little third-party interaction, the free conference call line is an option. This option does not have a record feature so accurate minute taking is critical.
- *Local Cable Access*- Currently, the town is not allowing for local cable access broadcast through the conference rooms in the Municipal Center.

However, to the extent possible, local cable will be used if it is accessible and safe for staff, committee members, and members of the public.

### **Use of Zoom for Remote Access to Public Meetings**

Zoom Video Communications, Inc. ("Zoom") can be used for remote conferencing services to allow for remote access to public meetings. Access numbers and web addresses will be provided as part of each meeting's agenda posted to the town calendar on the homepage of Grafton's website, [www.grafton-ma.gov](http://www.grafton-ma.gov).

Meetings can be accessed from your personal computer, cellphone and/or telephone. It is anticipated that most Board and Committee meetings will continue to be broadcasted by Grafton Access Television through Zoom's "Record" feature.

### **Protocols for Remote Public Meetings Using the Webinar Feature**

- All participants entering the meeting via a personal computer ("computer participants") are required to rename themselves with their official first and last name.
- Computer participants are encouraged to click on the "Participants" feature in Zoom to view all participants and to view/use the "Q&A" function to pose questions on the bottom of the screen.
- Computer participants may "Pin" to a particular video screen.
  - It is recommended to "Pin" to the staff member associated with the committee, or in the case where there is no staff member, to the Chairperson. This can be done by right clicking over the three (3) dots symbol in the top right corner of the staff/Chair's video screen.
- The Chair or present support staff should adhere to the script provided as an attachment to this document for the purpose of properly recognizing members and providing information to the public. (This script is a draft/guide and should be tailored to your needs)
- The Chairman will identify him or herself.
- The Chairman will conduct a roll call of the Board.
- The Chairman will call the meeting to order.
- All participants (excluding Board members) will be muted throughout the meeting and must use the Q&A function.

- All participants are required to include their name and address when using the chat feature to pose a question through the Chairperson.
- All documents displayed throughout the meeting will be controlled by the present staff member or Chairperson.
  - Only computer participants will be able to view documents.
- If and when the Chairman allows for public comments/questions, it will be conducted in the following sequence:
  1. The Chairman will read public comments/questions received in advance of the meeting followed by real-time Board and/or applicant responses.
  2. The Chairman will read real-time comments/questions typed by computer participants in the “Q&A” feature followed by real-time Board and/or applicant responses.
    - Computer participants must click on “Q&A” to enter their comment/question.
    - The staff or Chair will address the question live to the Board. It will be discussed and then marked “answered” by the staff or Chair.
  3. The Chairman will ask if any other participants accessing the meeting have comments/questions.
- Board members needing to be recused at any point during the course of a meeting will be placed in a virtual “Waiting Room” by the staff person or Chairperson.

Directions to access meetings will be posted on agendas for the public when available.

Separator Page 1  
(Draft Meeting Minutes)



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### **ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMISSION (AAC)**

**(Non-Regular Meeting)**

**DRAFT Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, August 1, 2023 – 5:00 p.m.

Members of the AAC attended the National Night Out event at the Grafton Police Station's and GCTV's parking lots to share information about the Commission with the public. No other commission business occurred during this event.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectively submitted,  
Kristie Proctor  
Clerk

**Adjourn**





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### **ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMISSION (AAC)**

**(Regular Meeting)**

**DRAFT Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, August 17, 2023 – 6:30 p.m.

Chair Rob Polsinelli called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

Attendance was taken by roll call:

Catherine Dore (CD) - Y

Robert Berger (RB) - Y

Roger Trahan (RT) - Y

Alexis Henry (AH) - Y

Kristie Proctor (KP) - Y

Paul Letourneau (PL) - Y

Rob Polsinelli, Chair (RP) - Y

#### **1. Announcements**

- a. AAC Vacancy filled – Official welcome for new member, Paul Letourneau. His seat runs through June, 2025.
- b. Any other announcements – MA MOD is now accepting applications for the annual disability improvement grant – any ideas?

Roger shared that the town submission usually asks for our support, but the deadline of September 15<sup>th</sup> means that this is the only meeting before the deadline. While there are many items to improve, no one from the school committee or town has contacted our commission. Members voiced support for Rob to reach out to the school committee and the Town Administrator to learn if there are plans to apply for the MOD grant. If our support was needed for a grant application, the Commission Chair would have to call for a special meeting for us

to convene and vote on a measure to write a support letter for the grant proposal.

Discussed the municipal accessibility projects completed recently and the recreation department's projects over the past few years. Could we identify an idea or project for the grant application? The opportunity could be identified from the excel worksheet. Clarification of scope of a proposal, who would write it, could we think of some items, technology, infrastructure, small items?

Chair Polsinelli asked Bob Berger for a time to meet and discuss some items on zoom Monday morning at 9:30 am.

## **2. External Correspondence**

### **3. Meeting Minutes – July 27, 2023**

**Action:** Paul Letourneau made a motion to approve the July 27, 2023, meeting minutes; Bob Berger seconded. After a discussion about the meeting packet and the record to include in the meeting minutes, and draft versions of supporting meeting documents, Chair Polsinelli took a roll call vote:

KP	Y
RSB	Y
RP	Y
CD	Y
AH	Y
PL	Y
RT	Y

The July 27, 2023 meeting minutes were approved, 7-0. The vote was declared carried.

### **4. Subcommittee update - web page content**

Robert S. Berger, Rob Polsinelli, Alexis Henry

Rob explained the updates to the draft web site content and how this document is now ready to deliver to the commission members. Rob requested the Town's verbiage for an accommodation invitation from Mr. William Blake, Assistant Town Manager. Discussed either going through the document or giving members homework to review and return to the next meeting with comments and needed edits.

Roger Trahan asked if we could click on the hyperlinks to make sure these are active. Alexis Henry explained that this will be a living document and that changes will be made, so updating and maintaining will be important to provide pertinent, timely information. The members will need to review verbiage and wordiness before deciding if the content is ready to publish. Paul Letourneau asked how access barriers are identified and reported to the Town? On the Town web site, there is a form for any citizen to fill out for general concerns or send comments to the town. Roger Trahan said that while this is a general form, accessibility concerns could be entered and sent to the Town Administrator.

Chair Polsinelli asked commission members to review the draft document before the next meeting in September. Rob will email us the document and send changes to him a week before our September meeting.

Discussed how to support adults who want to go to college and access support services. Do we just include QCC or add Worcester State? This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of all the MA colleges and their accessibility services office.

## 5. National Night Out

- a. Thank you to ***Paws for People*** for their participation. The therapy dogs were a huge draw for the crowd.
- b. **Action:** Bob Berger made a motion to draft a thank you letter to PAWS for People; seconded by Catherine Dore.

KP	Y
RSB	Y
RP	Y
CD	Y
AH	Y
PL	Y

RT	Y
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The motion passed unanimously 7-0.

- c. Thanks to commission members who gave of their time, resources, toys, and talents; thoughts on next year; and consideration for other outreach opportunities. Idea for next year – have a make craft with fidget toys. Also, have a poster or infographic of the work the commission does; Paul Letourneau suggested we advertise our work.

Looked up the article in the Shrewsbury Advocate on the National Night Out and we were featured for our Barbie Dream House, wheelchair Barbie, and the therapy dogs.

<https://www.communityadvocate.com/2023/08/07/grafon-police-host-annual-national-night-out/>

- d. Feedback from informal survey/comment board – Suggestions:
  - o Could we survey the town
  - o Time and money (the fund with \$700 from H parking fees)
  - o Send out survey electronically and collect responses with forms
  - o Survey people on election days
  - o PSAs alerting citizens of survey and use funds for mailing.
  - o Post on bulletin boards, senior center, post office, library
  - o Could we share postage costs with the Lions annual solicitation letter?

This items will be placed on the agenda for next month to review.

## **6. Old Business**

- a. Grafton By-Law Study Committee; Article 12, Safety and Order, Sections 21-1 through 21-4. Response from David Robbins, Chair of the Bylaw Study Committee, and updates on Mike Kennedy at Center for Living and Working and Jeffrey Dougan at MA Office on Disability.

Roger pointed out that all these items are going to Town Meeting in the Fall, and if we as a commission, in fact, miss a change we agree with, we may have to create an article to endorse a by-law change. See the meeting packet for Mike Kennedy's email response. The commission is

not receiving a straightforward response regarding the number of spaces. The town's by-laws are not compatible with the state law requirements for handicapped spaces per parking spaces. Roger noted that this should be identified as an area that needs to be removed, not edited or changed (deleted based on our recommendation as a commission with our knowledge of the state statute).

If we don't recommend anything in time for the fall Town Meeting, we can still review the content and make the recommendations for the spring Town Meeting. Roger wanted to see the person-centered language changed. (Deletion of the word "handicapped" in all three sections and replace it with a person-first term). Do we agree to delete 21-1 (A) paragraph 2?

**Action:** Alexis Henry made a motion to make a recommendation to the Town By-Law Committee to amend sections 21-1 through 21-4 to change the term "handicapped person" or its variations and replace it with the term "individual with a disability"; Paul Letourneau seconded. After a lengthy discussion and amending the motion to keep the change of ableist language but remove the section regarding the working of the town handicapped parking space formulas, Chair Polsinelli took a roll call vote:

KP	Y
RSB	Y
RP	Y
CD	Y
AH	Y
PL	Y
RT	Y

Chair Polsinelli announced the motion carried, 7-0.

Alexis Henry asked for the By-Law Committee deadline to send feedback. Can the parking space topic be dealt with at the next meeting? No date was found on the Town web site. This item (recommendations to the By-Law Committee) will be tabled until the next meeting.

- b. Grafton Common, including exterior parking, pavement

The T.A.'s office forwarded the information to the Highway Department.

c. Any other old business items

**7. New Business**

**8. Next Meeting** Thursday, September 21, 2023, at 6:30p.m.

**Action:** Paul Letourneau made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Alexis Henry seconded. Chair Polsinelli took a vote:

KP	Y
RSB	Y
RP	Y
CD	Y
PL	Y
AH	Y
RT	Y

Chair Polsinelli declared the motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 pm.

Respectively submitted,  
Kristie Proctor  
Clerk

**Adjourn**

Meeting Packet Link Below:

<https://www.grafton-ma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/9976>



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### ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMISSION (AAC)

(Emergency Meeting)

#### **DRAFT Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, September 13, 2023 – 6:30 p.m.

A copy of the Grafton Public Meeting Remote Participation Guidelines, dated March 24, 2020 (and subsequent extensions) is attached to this agenda for reference. Please review the guidelines prior to joining the remote public meeting. We will be fielding questions via Chat feature. Also, written comments may be directed to [disabilitycommission@grafton-ma.gov](mailto:disabilitycommission@grafton-ma.gov).

Chair Rob Polsinelli welcomed attendees and called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

Attendance was taken by roll call:

Catherine Dore (CD) - Y

Robert Berger (RB) - Y

Roger Trahan (RT) - Y

Alexis Henry (AH) - Y

Kristie Proctor (KP) - Y

Paul Letourneau (PL) - Absent (joined at 6:44 PM).

Rob Polsinelli, Chair (RP) - Y

KP	Y
RSB	Y
RP	Y
CD	Y
PL	Absent
AH	Y
RT	Y

Chair Polsinelli thanked everyone for taking the time to meet.

## 1. Municipal ADA Improvement Grant Submission

Mr. Berger and Chair Polsinelli identified several counters in the Municipal Center which could be modified to create accessibility for the office counters. Mr. William Blake was notified of this opportunity.

**Action:** Mr. Berger made a motion and Alexis Henry seconded the motion for the Chair to write a Letter of Support to the Town Administrator and Assistant Town Administrator for the Town to submit a grant application for the ADA Improvement Grant and costs associated with lowering counters in the Municipal Center to the MOD.

Discussed writing the draft, by whom, to whom, and what makes sense with this timeline? The letter would be addressed to the Town Administrator to support the Town applying for the grant. The Select Board would be cc-ed. The Applicant Team is Mr. William Blake and Mr. Berger. The letter should be written on behalf of the commission supporting the application. Discussed removing Mr. Berger's name from the Applicant Team as he is on this commission. Suggested that the Applicant Team would be the Town Administrator and the Assistant Town Administrator, with the Chair of the Select Board Cc-ed. The responsible town party would be Mr. Berger as the Grafton ADA Compliance Officer.

Paul LeTourneau joined the meeting at 6:44 PM.

Chair Polsinelli took a roll call vote of the members:

KP	Y
RSB	Y
RP	Y
CD	Y
PL	Y
AH	Y
RT	Y



Chair Polsinelli declared the motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

## **2. Bylaw Study Committee**

The By-law Committee found that two sections were duplications in Article 12 regarding parking spaces. Could these two sections be combined into one by-law covering public and private parking lots? Should the Commission write a letter of endorsement for these changes?

Roger Trahan commended the By-Law Committee for the background work they did to study this issue and arrive at this recommendation.

**Action:** Roger Trahan moved that the Accessibility Advisory Commission (AAC) recommend to the By-Law Study Committee the removal of Article 12, Sections 21-1 through 21-4 and replace it with the recommendations of the By-Law Study Committee which is contained in tonight's Meeting Packet, and for the AAC Chair to communicate this recommendation to the Chair of the By-Law Study Committee; Mr. Berger seconded.

Mr. Polsinelli took a roll call vote:

<b>KP</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>RSB</b>	Y
<b>RP</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>CD</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>PL</b>	Y
<b>AH</b>	Y
<b>RT</b>	<b>Y</b>

Chair Polsinelli declared the motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

## **3. Change in Regular Meeting Day**

Could we change our meeting night to the third Wednesday? Or meet on a Tuesday on the second or fourth Tuesday of the month? Discussed meeting possibilities. Mr. Trahan asked, "Could our Commission obtain its own Zoom

account?” Chair Rob Polsinelli will follow-up with the TA’s office to find the answer regarding zoom accounts. Mr. Berger also mentioned that the Grafton Building Department should have its own Zoom account, which means it could be shared with the AAC.

Members also discussed the possibility of rooms to meet in if the Commission ever returns to in-person, monthly meetings.

- Mondays – not good for some
- Tuesdays – good for most (2<sup>nd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> of the month)
- Wednesday – Not good for some; Kristie will consider changing if needed
- Thursday – Not good for some

Mr. Roger Trahan checked to see if Chair Polsinelli would be at Town Meeting. Chair Polsinelli replied in the affirmative.

**4. Next Meeting** Thursday, September 21, 2023, at 6:30p.m.

**Action:** Mr. Roger Trahan made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Berger seconded. Chair Polsinelli took a vote:

<b>KP</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>RSB</b>	Y
<b>RP</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>CD</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>PL</b>	Y
<b>AH</b>	Y
<b>RT</b>	<b>Y</b>

Chair Polsinelli declared the motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm.

Respectively submitted,  
Clerk

**Adjourn**

Meeting Packet Link Below:

<https://www.grafton-ma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/10273/Accessibility-Advisory-Commission-9-13-2023?bidId=>

**Adjourn**

Separator Page 2  
(Webpage Outline)

## AAC Webpage Outline

### Accessibility topic

- I. **Ask the Accessibility Advisory Commission a question** (LINK= email to the commission)
- II. **Accessing Support for Municipal Meetings** (Rob's looking for the language for Town's meetings, how to request an accommodation, etc.)
- III. **Grafton Website Accessibility Information** (<https://www.grafton-ma.gov/accessibility>)
- IV. **Voting for persons who cannot go to polling locations** (<https://www.grafton-ma.gov/886/OmniBallot--Accessible-Absentee-Ballot>)
- V. **Closed Captioning for GCTV** (<https://www.grafton-ma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/7536/Closed-Caption-Policy>)
- VI. **Americans With Disabilities Act and Disability Rights**
  - A. *The Americans with Disabilities Act* (ADA) [<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/learn-about-the-americans-with-disabilities-act-ada>] is a civil rights law mandating equal opportunity and access for individuals with disabilities. Support for concerns related to the ADA can be obtained from the *New England ADA Center* [<https://www.newenglandada.org/>]
  - B. *File an ADA complaint* (<https://www.ada.gov/file-a-complaint/>) if you believe that you were discriminated against based on a disability, you can file an ADA complaint against a state government or local government, or against a private business that serves the public.
  - C. *The Massachusetts Office on Disability* (<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-office-on-disability>) provides information on disability-related civil rights and obligations. MOD helps people with disabilities to understand their rights and helps cities, towns, places that serve the public, and state government agencies to understand accessibility obligations.
- VII. **Disability-Related Legal Assistance/Report a Concern or Abuse**
  - A. Report abuse/neglect of an adult with a disability: *The Disabled Persons Protection Commission (DPPC)* (<https://www.mass.gov/reporting-abuse-and-neglect>) protects adults with disabilities from abusive acts or omissions of caregivers through investigation oversight, public awareness, and prevention. Anyone who suspects the abuse or neglect of a person with a disability should file with DPPC.

- B. Report child abuse/neglect: *The Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF)* (<https://www.mass.gov/how-to/report-child-abuse-or-neglect>) works in partnership with families and communities to keep kids safe. Anyone who suspects the abuse or neglect of a child should file with DCF.
- C. ***Disability Law Center (DLC)*** ([www.dlc-ma.org](http://www.dlc-ma.org)) is the protection and advocacy for people with disabilities in Massachusetts. DLC provides legal advocacy on disability issues and promotes the rights of all people with disabilities to participate fully and equally in the social and economic life of MA.
- D. *Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee (MHLAC)* (<https://mhlac.org/>) provides information and advice to individuals involved with the Massachusetts mental health system.

### **VIII. Community and Independent Living Supports for Children and Adults**

- A. *The Federation for Children with Special Needs* (<https://fcsn.org/>) empowers families with children from birth to adulthood through assistance, training, and leadership development. They focus on education, early intervention, health care, transitions, and children in foster care and group homes, to support all children, especially those with disabilities, those at risk, and those with economic, cultural, or linguistic barriers.
- B. *Independent Living Centers* (<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/independent-living-centers>) are private, nonprofit, consumer-controlled organizations providing services and advocacy by and for people with all types of disabilities to support independent community living. With 11 ILCs throughout the state, the Center for Living and Working (<https://www.centerlw.org/>) in Worcester is closest to Grafton.
- C. Finding Caregivers for People with Disabilities: *The PCA Workforce Council* (<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/personal-care-attendant-workforce-council>) works to ensure the quality of long-term, in-home, personal care by recruiting and training the personal care attendant (PCAs) workforce serving MassHealth (MA Medicaid) members, and a helps to connect PCAs and MassHealth members seeking to hire them. *Rewarding Work* (<https://www.rewardingwork.org/>) helps individuals and families hire caregivers and provides a free resource for those seeking work as caregivers.
- D. *REquipment* (<https://dmereuse.org/>) is a durable medical equipment (DME) re-use program offering free refurbished wheelchairs, scooters, shower chairs and more to adults, children and elders living in Massachusetts.
- E. *MassMATCH* (<https://www.massmatch.org/>) is the state's initiative to Maximize Assistive Technology in Consumer's Hands. It is one of 56 state-level AT Act programs in the US. MassMATCH's mission is to promote the use of assistive technology and assistive technology services to enhance the independence of people with disabilities, enabling equal participation in all of life's activities.

- F. *Genesis Club* (<http://genesiscclub.org/>) is a work-focused, community-based organization located in Worcester that supports adults living with mental health conditions to access meaningful employment, healthy lifestyles, safe housing, and education and to find genuine belonging, friendships, and purpose.
- G. *Kiva Center* (<https://kivacenters.org/kiva-worcester/>) is the MA Recovery Learning Community serving the Central MA Area. Kiva Center offers peer support, training, advocacy, and policy change to assist individuals with their self-healing process related to trauma, emotional distress, and substance use experiences.

## **IX. Financial Supports (Health Insurance, Disability Benefits, Nutrition Assistance)**

- A. *The Massachusetts Health Connector* (<https://www.mahealthconnector.org/>) is the state-based health insurance Marketplace that makes shopping for affordable health and dental coverage easier for Massachusetts individuals, families, and small businesses.
- B. *Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI)* (<https://www.ssa.gov/benefits/disability/>) The SSDI and SSI programs provide assistance to people who meet Social Security requirements for disability. Additional assistance for Massachusetts residents can be found at: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/how-to-file-a-claim-for-ssdi-or-ssi>
- C. *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)* (<https://www.mass.gov/snap-benefits-formerly-food-stamps>) is a federal nutrition assistance program available to some individuals based on household size, income and expenses. In Massachusetts, SNAP is administered by the Department of Transitional Assistance.

## **X. Housing, Accessibility, and Universal Design**

- A. *The MA Architectural Access Board* (<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/architectural-access-board>) develops and enforces regulations designed to make public buildings accessible to, functional for, and safe for use by persons with disabilities.
- B. Grafton Housing Authority (<http://www.graftonhousing.com/Home.aspx>)
- C. *The Home Modification Loan Program* (<https://www.mass.gov/home-modification-loan-program-hmlp>) provides no interest loans to modify the homes of adults and children with disabilities. If you or a household member is disabled or an elder, the Home Modification Loan Program can provide a loan so you can make needed adaptations or modifications to your home to help you remain in your home and live more independently.
- D. *Institute for Human Centered Design* (<https://www.humancentereddesign.org/>) promotes excellence in universal and human-centered design to expand opportunities and enhance experiences for people of all ages, abilities, and cultures.

## **XI. Employment Services and Supports**

- A. *Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services* (<https://www.mass.gov/vocational-rehabilitation>) helps job seekers with disabilities obtain and maintain a job. VR helps people with physical, cognitive, intellectual, or mental health conditions manage the modern workplace.
- B. *MassHire – the Massachusetts Career Centers* (<https://www.mass.gov/masshire-career-centers>) offer employment and training services for job seekers and employers across the Commonwealth. The center closest to Grafton is in *Worcester* (<https://www.mass.gov/locations/masshire-worcester-career-center>).
- C. *Work Without Limits* (<https://workwithoutlimits.org/>) is a network of employers, educational institutions, service providers, government agencies, individuals with disabilities and their families. Work Without Limits programs and services meet the needs of employers recruiting people with disabilities as employees, individuals with disabilities who are seeking jobs, and the employment service providers that serve them.
- D. Working/earning while on SSDI, SSI and/or other benefits. *MRC's Project Impact* (<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/statewide-employment-services>) and *Work Without Limits Benefits Counseling* (<https://workwithoutlimits.org/benefits-counseling/>) are two programs that assist people with disabilities to understand how earnings from work and unearned income (such as gifts) may affect public benefits (SSDI, SSI, Medicaid, Medicare, SNAP) so that people can make informed decisions about working.

## **XII. Educational Supports**

- A. *Grafton Public Schools' Office of Special Education* (<https://www.graftonps.org/domain/302>) is responsible for ensuring necessary supports and accommodations for Grafton's pupils with special needs.
- B. *The MA Department of Early and Secondary Education (DESE)* As the State Educational Agency, *DESE* (<https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/>) has responsibility for general supervision under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). DESE provides technical assistance and monitors local education agencies' (LEAs) implementation of IDEA and state special education law.
- C. *Grafton Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)* (<https://www.graftonps.org/Page/378>) promotes understanding of, respect for, and support of all children with special needs in the community. SEPACs provide support for parents and guardians of children receiving special education services as well as recommendations and communication with other entities supporting those pupils.
- D. Community College (Kristie, help please!)

## **XIII. Massachusetts Disability-Serving Agencies**



- A. *The Mass Commission for the Blind (MCB)* (<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-commission-for-the-blind>) serves individuals in Massachusetts who are legally blind by providing access to employment opportunities and social rehabilitation with the goal of increasing independence and self-determination. To *apply for Blind ID/ Cert of Blindness* ([https://massgov.formstack.com/forms/mcb\\_id\\_and\\_certificate\\_of\\_blindness\\_request](https://massgov.formstack.com/forms/mcb_id_and_certificate_of_blindness_request))
- B. *Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH)* (<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-commission-for-the-deaf-and-hard-of-hearing>) provides accessible communication, education, and advocacy to consumers and private and public entities so that programs, services, and opportunities throughout Massachusetts are fully accessible to persons who are deaf and hard of hearing.
- C. As the State Mental Health Authority, *Department of Mental Health (DMH)* (<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-department-of-mental-health>) assures and provides access to services and supports to meet the mental health needs of individuals of all ages; enabling them to live, work and participate in their communities. *Apply to DMH* (<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/applications-for-dmh-services>).
- D. *Department of Developmental Services (DDS)* (<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/department-of-developmental-services>) provides supports for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities including Autism Spectrum Disorder to enhance opportunities to become fully engaged members of their community. *Apply to DDS* (<https://www.mass.gov/dds-eligibility-services>).
- E. HMEA's *Autism Resource Central* (<https://www.autismresourcecentral.org/>) is a source of information for children and families affected by Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). They provide services such as education, family activities, referrals, and support to families affected by ASD. This should be your first call if your child is diagnosed with ASD.
- F. *Department of Public Health Bureau of Substance Addiction Services (DPH's BSAS)* (<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/bureau-of-substance-addiction-services>) oversees the statewide system of prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery support services for individuals, families, and communities affected by substance addiction. BSAS hosts the Massachusetts Substance Abuse Hotline (<https://helplinema.org/>) that can be reached at 800-327-5050.
- G. *The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC)* (<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-rehabilitation-commission>) helps individuals with disabilities to live and work independently. MRC is responsible for

Vocational Rehabilitation, Community Living, and Disability Determination for federal benefit programs.

- H. Grafton's *Board of Health*'s (<https://www.grafton-ma.gov/448/Board-of-Health>) mission is to protect the health, safety, and well-being of the residents of the Town of Grafton.

#### **XIV. Transportation and Mobility Resources**

- A. *The Worcester Regional Transit Authority* (<https://therta.com/paratransit/ada-paratransit-eligibility/>) provides paratransit services to people with disabilities within the WRTA service area. The *Grafton Senior Center* coordinates the WRTA (<https://www.grafton-ma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3916/Grafton-WRTA-Senior-Van-Regulations-PDF?bidId=>) for van access for people in Grafton of all ages with disabilities.
- B. *MassMobility* (<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massmobility>) is an initiative to increase mobility for older adults, people with disabilities, veterans, low-income commuters, and others who lack transportation access in Massachusetts.
- C. Through Medical Affairs, the *Registry of Motor Vehicles* (<https://www.mass.gov/disability-plates-and-placards>) issues special license plates and placards to people with disabilities who meet certain medical qualifications. Disability plates and placards allow people with disabilities to park vehicles in designated handicap parking spaces.

Separator Page 3  
(Letter of Support)



**TOWN OF GRAFTON**  
GRAFTON MEMORIAL MUNICIPAL CENTER  
30 PROVIDENCE ROAD  
(508) 839-5335 • FAX (508) 839-4602  
[www.grafton-ma.gov](http://www.grafton-ma.gov)

**Accessibility Advisory Commission**

September 13, 2023

Mr. Evan Brassard, Town Administrator  
Town of Grafton  
30 Providence Road  
Grafton, MA 01519

Re: MOD ADA Municipal Grant Program (FY '24 grant cycle)

Dear Mr. Evan Brassard,

At its meeting of September 13, 2023, Grafton's Accessibility Advisory Commission voted to support The Town of Grafton's grant request to the Massachusetts Office on Disability for the Municipal ADA Improvement Grant Program (FY 24 grant cycle). The grant request is for a project grant that would be used to install ADA-compliant, accessible service counters at the offices of the Town Clerk, Board of Health, and Sewer Department.

The Town of Grafton has prioritized improving accessibility for its residents and employees in recent years and has been addressing the recommended actions from Grafton's municipal Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan of June 2019. The requested project grant to lower the remaining non-accessible service windows at the Municipal Center continues those efforts, resulting in improved access for individuals of all abilities.

The Accessibility Advisory Commission has discussed the benefit of these improvements, and it fully supports them. This project would assist our Commission's ongoing efforts to cause the full integration and participation of people of all abilities in the Town of Grafton.

Mr. Brassard, thank you for your efforts toward making The Town of Grafton more accessible.

Kind regards,

Robert Polsinelli Chair, Grafton Accessibility Advisory Commission

cc Mr. Matthew Often, Chair, Grafton Selectboard  
Mr. William Blake, Assistant Town Administrator

Separator Page 4  
(Letter of Appreciation)



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**Disability Commission**

September 19, 2023

Tufts PAWS for People  
Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine  
200 Westboro Road  
North Grafton, MA 01536

Re: In appreciation of participating in Grafton's National Night Out 2023

Dear Deb Gibbs,

At its meeting of August 17, 2023, Grafton's Accessibility Advisory Commission (AAC) voted unanimously to send this letter of appreciation to Tuft's PAWS for People for participating in Grafton's National Night Out activities in partnership with the AAC. Our Commission members in attendance agreed that your handlers and the therapy animals were incredible ambassadors for your program, as well as crowd favorites for many people. Adults and children alike were curious and excited to spend time with the animals, and the handlers were great at answering questions, speaking about the program and therapy animals, and being patient with each visitor. They were also instrumental in bringing many people to our table, so we appreciate your time in coordinating with us for them to be at the event.

We also want to thank Badger Blue, Ruby, and Nala for doing such a wonderful job given the volume of visitors and the length of time they were available. They were also quite photogenic, posing for many selfies and a few press shots, including a photo with State Senator Michael Moore.

Please extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who participated directly or helped to coordinate or prepare for the event.

Kind regards,

Rob Polsinelli, Chair  
Grafton Accessibility Advisory Commission

cc: Grafton Disability Commission